Trade with Australia

2638. SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some discussion concerning trade with Australia have been initiated recently;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether any progress has since been made in this regard;

(d) if so, what are the fields of trade to be benefited: and

(e) when practical line of trade will commence between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Indo-Australia trade discussions are held at official level in the forums of Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) and Joint Trade Committee (JTC) and at trade level in India/Australia Joint Business Council. During September 3-4, 1991, the meeting of the Joint Business Council was held in New Delhi. Meetings of JMC and JTC are scheduled to be held early next year.

(c) and (d) Consumer goods, software, agriculture and related industries, mining and energy, engineering, environmental technology, joint ventures etc. are potential areas for Indo-Australia Cooperation and expansion of trade.

(e) Practical line of trade already exists between the two countries.

Quality Control of Export Consignments

2639. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry maintains any quality control on our export consignments; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In exercise of the powers conferred under the Export (Quality Control & Inspection) Act, 1963, Ministry of Commerce have notified number of commodities in the discipline of Engineering, Food & Agricultural Products, Chemicals and Allied Products, Footwear and Footwear Components, Jute and Coir Products, etc., under the purview of Compulsory Pre-shipment Inspection. However, with a view to entrusting the responsibility of maintaining and satisfying foreign buyers' quality requirements, the system of compulsory pre-shipment inspection was reviewed and it had been streamlined as under:—

(i) Star Trading Houses, Trading Houses and Export Houses have been exempted from the purview of compulsory pre-shipment inspection of any commodity;

(ii) EPZ, FTZ and 100% EOUs have been exempted from the purview of compulsory pre-shipment inspection of any commodity;

(iii) Manufacturing/processing units approved by EIAs under the System of Inprocess Quality Control (IPQC) have been authorised to issue the statutory certificates of inspection by themselves;

(iv) Manufacturers/exporters of Engineering Products and Fish and Fishery Products, who attained the export of these products on an average level of Rs. 1.5 crores per annum during last 3 years and having competence of carrying out inspection by themselves, will be allowed self-certification facility i.e., these units may issue statutory certificate of inspection and need not obtain certificates from EIAs; and

(v) Compulsory pre-shipment inspection would not be necessary provided the exporter have a firm letter from the overseas buyer stating that the foreign